2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina



177 Hilton Head Island became known as a resort for the affluent. But similar developments have taken place on other Sea Islands. Hilton Head appears in many ways to have forecast what the future would bring. Its recent course is worth closer examination. In 1950 nearly all of the residents of Hilton Head were black; by 1980 they were outnumbered five to one by whites. According to Fraser, development has been a good thing for black natives of the islands. Resort development
177 "caused black-owned land on Hilton Head Island to increase in value
423 from $100 an acre near the beach or near the marshes to $50,000 or
•435 $100,000 an acre today. This flows into the pocket of the blacks who
432 elect to sell," he says.

> I sold lots at $7,000 which today sell for $350,000. Some blacks have done the same. Some of them, smarter than I was, held onto their land, as I and developers developed our land and pushed up the values. Now they are selling. I am jubilant, positively jubilant, when a black farm family that has held the land for five generations on Hilton Head Island, land that was worth $100 when we arrived here, sells it today for $50,000. I think that's wonderful.

177 Fraser contends that
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> it is a wise thing, for those who need the money, to elect to sell. Every black family that sells a portion of their heritage that was maintained with great struggle and great effort by their parents and grandparents and great-grandparents, and uses a part of that heritage to send a child to engineering school or to boarding school, is making an investment in the future of that family. I wish more of them would do it.

The emergence of Hilton Head Island as a playground for rich white northerners, in the opinion of Charles Fraser, has been beneficial for everyone.

But others are less sanguine. "We have witnessed some changes on Hilton Head over the last twenty-five years," suggests Emory Campbell, a native of the island, "and they have not all been good from the black perspective." Some contend that black landowners were induced to sell their land too cheaply—either through trickery or because they did not know the land's fair market value. Unquestionably some black families made money on the transactions, at least by comparison with the barterlike economy of the predevelopment decades. But even those who

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina
Johns Island

*Mrs. Janie Hunter*

## THIS WAS A KINDA POOR COUNTRY

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There were ten children in my family. Daddy was a foreman for Mr. Jenkins, and he have his own garden. I work in it. All work in it. Pick lima beans, pick cotton, tie the two cotton pod in the bag, and put a string on 'em, and hang the bag around your neck, and go to each one of those cotton bush, and pick the cotton, and stuff 'em in the bag. They was paying two cents a pound. Make thirty-five or forty cents a day. Man is getting forty cents a day.

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We wasn't making enough to afford a good living. My daddy, he make a living out the creek. He catch fish and we go around and sells 'em—a whole string for ten cents. Me and my sister Florence, we goes around with white dishpan on we head and sometime make two dollars. And two dollars would give you a box of food that time, 'cause food was very cheap. You could buy three cent worth of sugar, and you get a whole big piece of fat meat like that for a dime. You get a sack of grits for about fifty cent. Food was much cheaper than it is now. That's how we make living. Plant plenty of sweet potato, plenty peas and corn, and raise hog.

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Then we had flat flour. That's when President Hoover had chair. We had to go 'round to Mr. Walpool yard. They used to haul the flour there in one those big van truck, and load up his barn with this flour. Then all the colored and white had to line up and call by name, and they give you a bag of flat flour. 'Til we finally made a song out of it:

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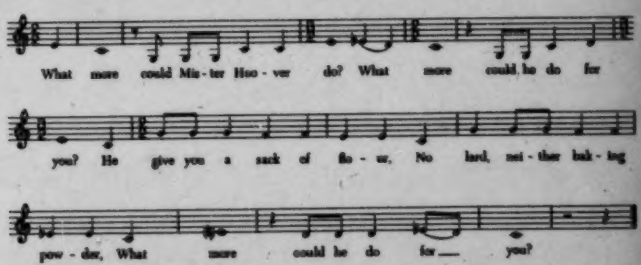
What more could Mis - ter Hoo - ver do? What more could he do for
you? He give you a sack of flo - ur, No lard, nei - ther bak - ing
pow - der, What more could he do for you?

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Everybody so hungry, so want the flour. We have to mix the flour, didn't have no grease, no lard. Just put 'em in the pan and bake. Some people could afford to buy baking powder and fix it good. But who couldn't, just had to bake it—sprinkle some flour on the bottom of the frying pan so it won't stick.

But after he turned out and President Roosevelt took seat, then we began to live a little better life. I don't think just the Negro was glad; I guess some of the white too was glad when President Roosevelt took the chair. This was a kinda poor country.

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina
Johns Island

*Mrs. Alice Wine*

## WE DO EVERYTHING FOR WESELF

159 935 241 Old times we never buy food. Man, you *never* used to buy nothing that time. Money use to never worry people but pay church and buy little things what you want or something like that. People raise the apple, they raise the fig tree, raise the plum, all kind of different thing. But now you got to see money. Money! You got to go for make money to buy. Is harder now. You got to work so hard to get a little bit of money. In that time you could (435) get a quart of grits for two cents.

My daddy farm for heself. He raise he own food. We raise all vegetables. Something to keep in the barn in the winter. He plant corn, plant peas. He have sons plow. I do some too. And after we do all that, then they harvest 'em there in the barn. Then you ain't have to work in the winter.

(443) (438) (231) Them times just a couple of stores, but you have to walk over seven miles to it. They sell food, but when you can plant your own, you make your own living. We have plenty chicken and have eggs and have plenty cows and have the milk. And my mother made butter—we own butter. Have we own churn and everything. Do everything for weself. So we never buy.

(251) Those times people raise the tomatoes and the okra and can it. And they do that right now. They can it, they fix the bean, they dry the beans and the peas. They cut up the okra and they dry that.

159 935 (438) (388) My mother didn't never buy no kind of food. They make soap. They make plenty soap. But what they make it out, I don't know. They grind corn and make flour and grits. And we have the mortar and beat the rice. And meat, we kill the hog and put 'em in salt. End of the year, they put up hog. Kill the cow and have beef meat.

(252) (251) (226) Daddy go in the creek and get we tub of fish—plenty fish that time. Get the fish out the creek—oshters, crab, mushel. Then we use to get them cookies five for a penny. Now cost penny a piece.

(294) For clothes my daddy and mother they buy the cloth and make it. My mother had a machine and he do all his sewing.

362 is 4.67. Edisto has 239 Black occupied units.

Precise data on the secondary characteristics of Black Sea Island housing units were unavailable. The following figures are based on a total of 3,685 rural units and 613 rural farm units in Charleston County and can consequently serve only as a general indicator for the secondary characteristics of Black Sea Island households. Only 1,547 of the rural units have all plumbing facilities. One thousand three hundred and eighty-six of these units are renter occupied. The overwhelming majority (3,381) of the units have no inside water facilities. One thousand six hundred and forty-five of the units were constructed before 1939 and 1,384 between 1940 and 1949. One thousand three hundred and twenty-seven of the units are valued at less than $5,000. The median size of rural units is 4.05 rooms.

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Of a total of 18,952 Black occupied units in the county, 8,142 units are owner occupied. Of the owner occupied units 2,988 were occupied in 1949 or earlier and 1,069 of the renters have a similar residency pattern. The median size of all Black occupied units is 4.7 rooms. The median size of owner occupied units is 5.7 and 4.0 for renter units. The median monthly rent paid is $41.00 for units without and $48.00 for units with all plumbing facilities.

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11: Johnson H-4,5 (no date) 1930
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567 262 plantations in 1862, reported that Thomas A. Coffin gave his 250 slaves twelve beeves in summer and four at Christmas, four barrels of molasses in summer, and from April to June, when work was heavy, two pecks of corn and two and a half pounds of bacon per slave.[28] He also regularly (263) (276) gave every hand a quart of salt a month and every man two "hands" of tobacco a month and four "hands" at Christmas.

(226) In addition to the rations issued by the master, the slave might gather from the plantation creeks and rivers all the oysters and crabs which he desired. The practice in regard to the fish varied with the plantations, as will be indicated later.[29] Each family was also given a small 567 241 patch of ground, about one task, back of the cabin to cultivate as desired. Most families planted three or four rows of corn and put the rest in potatoes. They ate part of 567 231 the corn, but fed most of it to the pig and chickens which each hand was permitted to keep. Some planters on St. Helena even permitted their Negroes to have cattle. Nor did the hands usually eat their stock and poultry, but sold it to the master or to the island storekeeper or to merchants in Beaufort.

567 432 (435) When Captain Basil Hall visited a plantation on St. Simon's Island in 1828, he found that the master's family was supplied entirely with poultry and eggs by his Negroes at these prices: eggs, 12½ cents a dozen; chickens, 12½ cents each; fowls, 20 to 25 cents each; ducks, 50 cents each.[30] They were given the liberty to carry their produce to a better market if they could find one. With

[28] MS in Port Royal Correspondence. In Archives of U. S. Treasury Department.
[29] *Infra*, p. 142.
[30] Hall, *Travels in North America*, II, 232.

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the money thus obtained they bought extra clothing, coffee, sugar, and what was with them the chief necessity of life, tobacco.[31]

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R. W. Roper estimated in 1844, in an address delivered in Columbia, S. C., before the State Agricultural Society, that it cost a planter $11.52 annually to feed a slave.[32] His estimate was based upon the following rations: twelve bushels of corn at 50 cents a bushel, twelve quarts of salt at 1 cent a quart, two pounds of bacon a week at 4½ cents a pound, and twelve pounds of tobacco a year at 6 cents a pound. While the prices quoted in 1844 were, of course, not the same for each year of the ante-bellum period, they approximated fairly closely the general average.

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Clothing cost the planter considerably less. St. Helena planters ordinarily allowed each slave two suits a year, one for summer and another for winter. Thomas A. Coffin, of Coffin's Point plantation, gave out in April for every 200 hands 500 yards of men's blue cotton cloth, like the material used in workmen's clothes in the North, 600 yards of coarse unbleached cotton shirting for the men, 600 yards of the same material for women's underclothes, 600 yards of calico in gay colors for frocks, 100 handkerchief pieces, and 100 straw hats for men. In November he issued 550 yards of stout woolen cloth for men's clothes and 600 yards of thinner woolen for women, 1,200 yards of unbleached cloth for shirts and underclothes, 100 turban handkerchiefs for the women, 100 warm caps for the men; 200 pairs of shoes, and 67 blankets of assorted sizes. The house servants got hose and flannels in addition to

[31] Pierce, "Report," *Rebellion Record*, sup., I, 310.
[32] R. W. Roper, "Address," *Southern Agriculturist*, new ser., V, no. 3, p. 89.

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these supplies,[33] and the drivers four suits a year, instead of the usual two suits received by field hands.

Roper estimated that the average yearly cost of clothing was $6.12 a slave as follows: six yards of woolens at 55 cents a yard, six yards of summer homespun at 10 cents a yard, a pair of shoes at 90 cents, a hat, cap, or handkerchief at 25 cents, a blanket every three years at $4 a blanket, and needles, thread, buttons, and trimmings at 24 cents a year.[34] This estimate brought the average cost of food and clothing to $17.64 a slave.[35]

Upon adding to this estimate the expense of providing a house, medical care, and incidentals, one finds that the cost to the master amounted to a little less than $50. When it is remembered that two or more slaves were fed and clothed for every taskable hand, it will be seen that the cost per hand ran between $75 and $100 a year, equivalent to wages of about $7 or $8 a month. In 1860 a day laborer was receiving in South Carolina 82 cents a day without board and a farm hand $11.37 a month with board, only a few dollars more than it cost a planter to maintain each taskable hand.[36] When it is considered that slaves, unskilled and often poorly supervised, cultivated only six acres to the hand, it will be seen that the plantation operated not only at a low wage level, but also at a low level of efficiency.

The type of houses provided for the slaves varied with the plantation management, as did every other phase of the plantation routine. When Timothy Ford, of Morris

[33] MS in Port Royal Correspondence.
[34] Roper, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
[35] Phillips, *Plantation and Frontier*, I, 135. Louis Manigault, of Argyle Island, estimated that food and clothing for 1838 cost him about $21 a slave.
[36] *U. S. Census of Mortality and Miscellaneous Statistics*, 1860, p. 512.

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tages in Scotland." In each was a chest, a table, two or three chairs, and a few shelves for crockery."

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Although it was customary for sea-island planters to provide their Negro quarters with floors, occasionally temporary quarters were built without floors as a means of combating some contagious disease. For instance, after the slaves on his plantation had suffered from a disastrous attack of Asiatic cholera, E. M. Whaley, of Little Edisto Island, burned the old quarters and built temporary ones without floors at a considerable distance from the former location. It was to the planter's interest to keep his "people" well and as comfortable as he deemed consistent with his plantation economy, for a slave was the most valuable piece of property he possessed. Cattle were valued at $7 a head, a yoke of oxen and wagon at $45, a mule at $100, but a prime slave might bring as high as $2,000.

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## MEDICAL CARE OF THE SLAVE

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Sea-island planters, aside from humanitarian reasons, carefully guarded their people's health because it was good business to do so. In the lists of rules which the planter included in his contract with his overseer, there invariably occurred specific instructions concerning the medical care which the Negroes should receive. P. C. J. Weston's instructions to his overseer on his rice plantation in South Carolina began with the statement, "The Proprietor, in the first place, wishes the Overseer most distinctly to understand that his first object is to be, under all circumstances, the care and well being of the Negroes." The instructions further read: "Strong medicines should be left to the

" Lyell, *Second Visit to the United States*, I, 249, 264.

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those of the same race, for the charitable purpose of providing homes for such heads of families."[80] The land thus reserved was to be sold to Negroes at not less than $1.25 an acre. All other land the President authorized to be sold in parcels of not more than 320 acres at public auction.

On December 10, 1863, the sales to heads of families began and were continued at irregular intervals until 1870 when the board was dissolved. In 1863 General Saxton issued a circular to the freedmen of South Carolina, authorizing them to locate on the land set aside for them. They were then directed to deposit with the commissioners on days announced for this purpose the full purchase price of the land together with a description of it and the date of preemption.[81] Buildings on any of these tracts were to be sold at one-third the appraised value. By June, 1865, there had been 347 purchases made on St. Helena Island. Of this number, 243 bought ten acres, 166 paying $1.50 an acre and 72 paying $1.25, the other five paying from $2 to $6.50 an acre. The highest price paid for any tract was $350 for twenty acres. In only two instances did purchasers buy land as low as $1 an acre.[82]

[80] "Instructions Issued By President Lincoln . . . to the United States Direct Tax Commissioners for South Carolina," *Compilation of Direct Tax Laws*, pp. 61-66; *House Ex. Doc. no. 146*, 40th Cong., 2d sess. Parts of the following plantations on St. Helena Island were set aside: The Oaks, Oakland, Indian Hill, Eddings' Point, Tom Fripp's plantation, Cedar Grove, Hamilton Fripp's plantation, the McTureous lands, Hope plantation, Woodstock, Frogmore, Frank Pritchard's plantation, Jane Pritchard's plantation, Scott plantation, Oliver Fripp's plantation, Wallace plantation, and the Fendon tract.

[81] The right of preemption was later abandoned. See Saxton's report to Stanton, *Official Records*, ser. III, vol. IV, serial no. 125, pp. 1022-1031.

[82] See MSS, Heads of Families Certificate Books. In Archives of U. S. Treasury Department.

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operation a system whereby he might train the Negro to ways of thrift and independence. Nor did the Government ever give the Negroes tools and farm equipment except as laborers on the government-operated plantations. When the Negro became a landowner he equipped his own farm from supplies at the trade stores for which he paid prices two or three times greater than those in the New York market;[9] or he bought equipment at the auction sales of confiscated property, paying the highest prices and often bidding against white men.

Nevertheless, it was a fact that the character of the Negro as a hired laborer had been injured by the inflated prices which the soldiers paid them for their wares and by the injudicious policy of their well-meaning friends of the North. White planters, for instance, were jealously watched by officials of the Freedmen's Bureau who were over-anxious lest the freedmen be victimized. Officials of the Freedmen's Bureau laid down the terms of the contract between planter and employee,[10] giving the employer practically no control over his laborers.

Under the system of labor thus established the Negro worked for his employer less than three months in the year.[11] He seldom worked more than five hours a day and half of that time he spent on his own crop of corn, potatoes, and peanuts so that the planter had the use of his services about one-fourth of each working day. In addition, the planter supplied each family of laborers with

[9] Reid, *After the War*, p. 114.

[10] See Webster, "The Operations of the Freedmen's Bureau in South Carolina," *Smith College Studies*, I, 93-104, 113-118.

[11] See "The South As It Is," *Nation*, Dec., 1865, p. 747. Dennett interviewed most of the planters on St. Helena. See also *Sen. Ex. Doc.* no. 6, 39th Cong., 2d sess., p. 123.